

Knife Fire Update

Date: May 28, 2006, 6 p.m.

Fire Name: Knife Fire

Time/Date Started: May 27, 2006; Called in by O'Leary Lookout at 2:14 p.m.

Location: Southeast of Walnut Canyon; about 14 miles east of downtown Flagstaff; on the Coconino National Forest

Cause: Human-caused; under investigation

Fuels: Pinyon/juniper woodlands; grasses; lots of dead material

Size: 521 acres (The increase in acreage as compared to today's earlier update is largely due to more accurate mapping.)

% Contained: 80 %

Estimated Containment Date: Evening of May 30, 2006

Resources Committed: 5 engines, 3 water tenders, 2 Type 1 crews (Mormon Lake Hotshots from the Coconino National Forest and the Pike Hotshots from Colorado), 2 Type 2 crews, 4 dozers, and several individual firefighting personnel; Total personnel = 118. Several agencies are assisting in the suppression of the fire including the Forest Service, Summit Fire Department, Highlands Fire Department, Sedona Fire Department and Parks-Bellemont Fire Department.

Estimated Cost to Date: \$50,000

Predicted Weather: Tomorrow's weather looks more favorable for fire suppression. Much lighter winds are expected. Wind speeds will drop off significantly on Memorial Day and will remain light the rest of the week. Temperatures will gradually increase.

Structures: No structures threatened.

Concerns: There was substantially less smoke on Interstate 40 today than yesterday. Most of the smoke is dissipating before it reaches the highway. Through the evening, there is the possibility of light smoke impacts to Interstate 40. The fire remains within a mile of the highway. The frontage road (Road 4) on the south side of Interstate 40 between Winona and Twin Arrows is closed. Also, Forest Road 82 is closed at its junction with Forest Road 128. Motorists are asked to avoid the fire area due to heavy use by firefighting equipment and personnel.

Summary: Firefighters completed building a line around the fire today. However, there were flare-ups internal to the fire. There were also areas where the fire moved beyond containment lines. Firefighters call them slopovers. Tonight, firefighters will be working to contain a slopover on the east side of the fire. (Further east is an area previously burned by the Lizard Fire in 2003.) Tomorrow, fire managers plan to hold the line that has already been constructed and monitor the fire for any other slopovers or spot fires.

Restrictions: Campfire and smoking restrictions are in place for the Coconino National Forest. The Knife Fire was human-caused, although the exact cause is still under investigation. Forest visitors are urged to obey the rules regarding campfire and smoking restrictions. Violation of these prohibitions is punishable by a fine of not more than \$5,000, imprisonment of not more than 6 months, or both.

- Campfires, charcoal grills, and stove fires are prohibited on national forest lands, roads, and trails. An **exception** will be to continue to allow these campfires in developed **fee** recreation sites where grills and campfire rings are provided.
- Pressurized liquid or gas stoves, lanterns and heaters meeting safety specifications are allowed.
- Smoking is prohibited except within enclosed vehicles, buildings, or developed **fee** recreation sites where the area is cleared of all flammable material.

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